



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Wilmington, NC

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

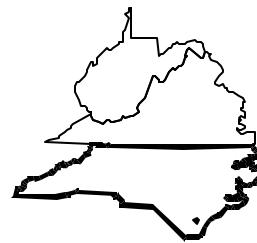
EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Wilmington for a Brownfields Pilot. Wilmington (population 55,530) is located along the Cape Fear River on the eastern coast of North Carolina. The city used to be a busy international port exporting cotton, and was supported by the textile industry and small beach communities. As the textile mills relocated, the economy became service-based, supporting tourists, the movie industry, retirees, and students. Residents in the project area, where most of the mills were located, lost their jobs after the relocations. The project area (population 13,325) is 74 percent African American, and 42 percent of the residents currently live below the poverty line. The city as a whole has an unemployment rate of 6 percent, but the project area's unemployment rate is 12 percent.

The Pilot targets seven neighborhoods that once supported the textile industry. Northside, North 4th Street, Hemmenway, Bottom, Castle Street, Dry Pond, and Dawson-Greenfield were once vibrant communities where mills, warehouses, and factories operated. Residents owned homes in the downtown area near their workplaces, many of which are now located near abandoned or underused buildings or vacant lots. When the industries relocated, they left

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Wilmington, North Carolina

Date of Announcement:
June 1999

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets seven former textile mill-neighborhoods located near the Cape Fear River and the Wilmington downtown area.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region4/wastepgs/brownfpgs/bf.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

behind the factory buildings and mills that have now become blighted, unsafe eyesores. While the rest of city and the region experience an economic resurgence from the new service-sector and tourism-driven economy, the project area has been decimated economically and environmentally by the exodus of industry. Now these neighborhoods are adjacent to more than 70 acres of brownfields sites and little is known about their environmental condition.

OBJECTIVES

The City of Wilmington is planning for its future by creating its Vision 2020 Plan. The plan outlines the city's goals of redeveloping the downtown area and creating an urban environment that retains historical character and is linked to the surrounding neighborhoods. This revitalization plan also addresses redevelopment in the seven neighborhoods surrounding the downtown area and situated near the river, and seeks to lessen their feeling of isolation. The Pilot will further these city goals by developing an inventory and identifying brownfields sites within the neighborhoods that may be candidates for redevelopment activities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Developing a brownfields site inventory and ranking the sites according to economic development potential and community priorities;
- Conducting Phase I and II site assessments at the highest-priority sites;
- Developing cleanup and redevelopment plans for the assessed sites; and
- Performing community outreach activities and engaging the community in decision-making.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.